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Contact: Julie Limpach
(216) 707-2261
jlimpach@clevelandart.org

Freeman Foundation Awards $722,457 Grant to Cleveland Museum of Art New *Asian Odyssey* Program Will Benefit Teachers, Students

CLEVELAND (Jan. 15, 2003) — The New York-based Freeman Foundation last summer awarded a three-year grant of $722,457 to the Cleveland Museum of Art for *Asian Odyssey: A National K–12 Interdisciplinary Curriculum Model*.

The new program is designed to share the benefit of the Museum's renowned collection of Asian art with teachers and students at all grade levels using video conferencing and Web-based distance learning technologies. Museum staff will also collaborate on the project with the Shaker Heights City Schools (Greater Cleveland), Beachwood City Schools (Greater Cleveland) and Westerville Schools (Greater Columbus). The group effort is an outgrowth of an Asian studies course for high school students offered by the Museum since 1986 in conjunction with Shaker Heights and Beachwood — perhaps the longest-lived school-museum initiative featuring Asian art.

In addition to curriculum development, the funding will cover costs of guest lecturers; digital and multimedia representations of items in the collections to create for example, the virtual unrolling and scrutiny of an Asian scroll; scholarships for student travel to China and Japan; and student-created audio tour scripts for the Museum's permanent collection. An exchange program with a high school in China will be set-up during the second year of the grant.

Museum Director Katharine Lee Reid thanked the Foundation, stressing the value of the gift to the institution. "Thanks to the expertise of our curatorial staff in our world-renowned Asian art collection, and certainly the vision of our education staff and Information Technology department, we will now have the capacity to foster connections with art and culture that transcend both the classroom and geographic borders," said Reid. "This is possible because of the benevolence of the Freeman Foundation, to whom we are most grateful."

The Museum's Asian holdings include more than 5,800 objects of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian and Southeast Asian origin acquired throughout the Museum's history. Its director of education and public programs, Marjorie Williams, holds a master's degree in Asian art history and museum studies and has organized exhibitions and written extensively on Asian art.

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The Freeman Foundation is committed to developing a greater appreciation of Asian cultures, histories and economies in the United States. The Foundation's Asian Art/Educational Outreach Funding Initiative, through which this grant is awarded, was recently established to support museums with significant Asian art collections or exhibitions or both in their efforts to increase public and student access to East Asian art in the United States.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive art museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth spanning 5,000 years. The Museum is a key international forum for exhibitions, scholarship, and art acquisitions. For more information on the CMA and its events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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